Academic Program Found Most Important in Recruiting Football Players

BOULDER, COLO.

The quality of a university's academic program is more important to college-bound football players than is the prowess of its athletic teams, according to a new survey.

Of 666 freshman football players at 30 universities, 88 per cent said their institution's academic program was a "very important" part of their decision to attend it. No other factor, including the institution's national ranking in football, was considered as important by as many players.

In addition, when the players were asked to rank the "one thing you liked most about the university" they decided to attend, 33.1 per cent listed the "people and atmosphere," 24 per cent the academic program, and only 21 per cent the athletic program.

"The important point to make about this particular survey was that it was taken during August, before the students had had a chance to become deeply involved in football or in school," said Charles M. Neinas, executive director of the College Football Association, which conducted the survey. "We were trying to get an uncluttered view of why the athletes chose a particular institution by asking them before they had a chance to settle in there."

Mr. Neinas added that the survey results substantiated those of another C.F.A. poll conducted during the 1980-81 academic year. In that study, athletes listed academic programs as a very important part of their decision to choose one institution over others.

The athletes were asked to rank nine factors as "very important," "somewhat important," or "not very important" in helping them decide which institution to attend. Following are the nine factors and the percentage of athletes who listed them as being "very important":

Academic program	88.3%
Personality of recruiters	70.8%
Location of the institution	54.4%
Bowl-game participation	44.0%
National football ranking	42.1%
Television exposure of teams	28.6%
Condition of stadium	24.2%
Media coverage	24.2%
Number of players who have turned professional	20.5%

The survey, which was conducted in August, 1983, also found that:

► Just under 3 per cent of the students thought they had been misled by recruiters.

► About 84 per cent said recruiters should be allowed to visit high-school athletes more than the three times allowed by the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

► About 44 per cent said their parents were the most helpful people in their deciding on an institution; about 19 per cent said a college coach was most helpful; and about 11 per cent listed themselves as being most helpful.

► Fewer than 2 per cent said they would rather attend another institution.

Of the 30 institutions whose athletes participated in the survey, five belong to the Atlantic Coast Conference, five to the Southeastern Conference, four to the Big 8 Conference, four to the Southwest Athletic Conference, and three to the Western Athletic Conference; nine institutions are not affiliated with any conference.

The results of the survey appear in this month's issue of the newsletter *CFA Sidelines*.

The C.F.A. is an association of 60 colleges and universities that field some of the country's most powerful football teams.

—N. SCOTT VANCE

Nebraska Vows to Prosecute Cheaters

LINCOLN, NEB.

The University of Nebraska board of regents has resolved to take legal action against anyone who causes the university's athletic department to violate rules of the National Collegiate Athletic Association or the Big 8 Conference.

Robert Simmons, Jr., the board member who proposed the resolution, argued that it would be a dereliction of duty if the regents did not protect the university against the overzealousness of sports boosters. The N.C.A.A. and most conferences hold institutions responsible for the actions of their supporters.

The resolution also instructed the university's president to discipline any employee whom he finds responsible for infractions.

The board's action followed recent public comments by Mike Rozier, a former Nebraska football star, which implied that alumni had sent him money while he was at the university. Mr. Rozier later said his statement had been misinterpreted and that he had not taken money from alumni.

Academic Rules for Athletes

Continued from Preceding Page

terials for use by college-bound athletes.

"The N.C.A.A. realizes this is a problem," said Eric Zemper, research coordinator for the association. "We don't have a direct line of communication to high schools across the country, but we're actively pursuing ways of getting the word out. It just takes time."

Mr. Zemper said the N.C.A.A. was talking with officials of national associations of high-school principals, counselors, and athletic directors and hoped they would help to alert schools of the rule's provisions.

"There's no doubt that the results of this survey will only serve to spur that effort on a little bit," Mr. Zemper added.

The survey showed that while 75 per cent of those polled knew of the rule, only 49 per cent had taken measures to insure that their athletes knew about it.

In addition, only 29 per cent of those polled said that, as a direct result of the rule's adoption, they were advising top athletes to take the required 11 academic courses.

Of those who knew about the rule before receiving the questionnaire, 34 per cent were advising their athletes to take the courses, and of those who were not aware of the rule, 11 per cent were advising their athletes to do so.

Surveys were sent to principals at 20 per cent, or 4,688, of the nation's high schools. About 44 per cent responded.

The survey also found that:

► Twenty-one per cent of those polled disapproved of the rule's reliance on standardized test scores, while only 6 per cent and 7 per cent, respectively, opposed the rule's use of grade and curriculum requirements. Many civil-rights leaders have assailed the rule, contending that its reliance on standardized-test scores discriminates against members of minority groups.

► Nearly 10 per cent of the principals had "received specific, explanatory information" about the rule from a college or university; 68.4 per cent had learned of the rule from news reports.

► The schools of nearly 13 per cent had "established communication procedures with parents specifically dealing with implications of the rule."

► The schools of 11 per cent of the respondents had changed their curricula as a result of the rule's adoption, most of them by changing requirements for graduation or by changing the requirements for participation in sports, or both.

The professors also surveyed the 277 institutions in the N.C.A.A.'s Division I, but said the response rate was so low that the data were of limited use. Of 277 institutions surveyed 60, or 22 per cent, responded.

Most of the institutions said they had 150 or more students participating in athletics. Of those responding:

► About 52 per cent said that fewer than 15 of their athletes would fail to meet the test-score requirements of Rule 48 if it were in effect today.

► About 14 per cent said that between 16 and 30 would not qualify.

► About 10 per cent said that between 31 and 45 would not qualify.

► About 7 per cent said that between 46 and 60 would not qualify.

► About 17 per cent said that 61 or more of their athletes would not qualify.

The professors accused the N.C.A.A. of attempting to discourage its members from participating in the Clemson survey, a charge that was emphatically denied by N.C.A.A. officials.

The N.C.A.A. is conducting its own study concerning Rule 48, which it expects to finish in 1985. The study, which will cost the association some $200,000, will track the relationship between athletes' academic performance in college and their high-school grades and standardized-test scores.

That study could provide information indicating that the grade averages and test scores used in Rule 48 should be changed.

—N. SCOTT VANCE

People in Sports

Leo Bemis, men's soccer coach at U. of Pittsburgh, has retired.

Robert A. Bowlsby, interim athletic director at U. of Northern Iowa, to athletic director.

Ron Chismar, assistant football coach at Arizona State U., to football coach at Wichita State U.

Christine Davenport, former all-America hurdler at U. of Iowa, to women's track and field coach at Cornell College.

Larry Kirksey, football coach at Kentucky State U., has resigned, effective immediately.

Ron Murphy, assistant football coach at Wittenberg U., to football coach.

Professionals In Action

Bobby Orr changed the way people think about the sport of hockey. Bob Hamilton is changing the way people think about college bookstores.

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